Prevention is Possible

#mcsartvigil

The Montgomery County Sexual Assault Response Team Presents

An Evening to Listen and Learn Honoring Survivors of Sexual Assault
#METOO
#MCSARTVIGIL
#SAAM
WHAT IS SEXUAL VIOLENCE?
Sexual violence is any type of unwanted sexual contact.

Victims often know the person who sexually assaulted them.
6 out of 10 victims stated that the offender was an intimate partner, other relative, a friend, or an acquaintance.
Almost 70% of sexual assaults reported to law enforcement occurred in the residence of the victim, the offender, or another individual.

Offenders may use coercion, manipulation, threats, or force to commit sexual violence.

REPORTING SEXUAL VIOLENCE:
Victims of sexual violence exhibit a spectrum of responses to the assault, which can include: calm, hysteria, withdrawal, anger, apathy, denial, and shock.
There is no "right way" to react to being sexually assaulted. Assumptions about a way a victim "should act" may be detrimental to the victim because each victim copes with the trauma of the assault in different ways which can also vary over time.

About 70% of sexual assaults go unreported
Because a victim did not immediately report an assault or chooses not to report it at all does not mean that the assault did not happen.
Montgomery County Correctional Facility

There are witnesses, bystanders, victims, and survivors who are incarcerated and can not join this event in person, but who are still part of the community who care and support sexual assault prevention and awareness.

We respectfully share their reflections of art and writing with you on their behalf...
We all know someone or have been a part of sexual violence ourselves...

Through art and writing, we are sharing our reflections on sexual violence as a witness, bystander, victim or survivor...

Our Voice Has Power!
### April 2018

**Sexual Assault Awareness Month**

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*Vigil...*

**In Loving Memory**

**Love**

**Guiding Light**

**Hope**

**Out of the Shadows**

**Stand Tall**

**Relamp**

**Inspired**

**No Limits**

**fearless**

**LOVE**

**IN HER DARKEST HOUR**

**REVEALED TO BE HEALED**

**FAITH, LOVE, AND HOPE**

**The best therapy**

**Comfort Shared**

**recipe for life**

**Our Dreams**

**Our Healing**

**Breakout**

**The Box**

**Purpose**

**Standing Together**

**Key to My Dreams**

**Strength in Suffering**

**We Won't Break**

**Beginning Again**

**The Power of a Smile**

**Someone Cares**

**Relamp**

**Inspired**

**No Limits**

**fearless**

**LOVE**
Es mi cuerpo.

Son mis derechos.

We all have the power to heal.

1 in 5 women will be sexually assaulted.

Stop.
Apology Letter

I hope these words weigh down the sheet of paper on which they sit,
That they are heavy on the tongue and lips they are spoken from,
Taking the weight of the world from the shoulders of your heart when you hear them,
I know your plight, the spot that stains your days with fear, the shadow that follows you everywhere whispering “worry” in your ear,
I know it well, the heckler in your head spewing hatred and hurt downplaying your worth,
They are all lies, your life is sacred, don’t let ignorance and selfishness taint it,
Instead let me paint it in gold, every chair you sit in is a thrown,
If love is the fabric of life, you are the seamstress, you deserve better,
And where the world falls short, let this be its apology letter,
Sorry for the pain, and sorry for the shame,
Sorry that your life may never be the same.
#US Too

THE UNITED SHAME OF AMERICA

This is a true story. 50 sentences long. Each sentence represents a story from a victim of sexual harassment, assault, or abuse. Each woman (and man) came forward, not to sex-shame, but to share their pain. 

Change will not happen until we collectively feel a sense of shame for all of us. This map represents the shame of America. Each line represents a story of a woman that has been victimized.

- Change will not happen until we collectively feel a sense of shame for all of us.
- Each line represents a story of a woman that has been victimized.
- This map represents the shame of America.
- This is a true story. 50 sentences long. Each sentence represents a story from a victim of sexual harassment, assault, or abuse.
I’ve known something was up when he sent his assistant to another room. He pulled a key out more based on my experience and education. But I needed my job. I provided for my child and simply said, “What can I do? Men will be men.” He left; I cried. I was so young, so naive. I thought they would thank me and fly ever after.

One day I was called into his private office; he closed the door and flirted and asked for it. One day he came over to my desk, cornered me, grabbed me, and simply said, “What can I do? Men will be men.” He shoved his groin into mine, so I pushed him off me and my whole body shut down. He was in a sexual rage—like a wild beast fighting for what he wanted. Because he could have easily fired me if I said anything. But when the shock wore off, I knew I had to act. To exact change.

I tried my best to avoid him—if I saw him in the elevator, I would take the stairs; if I say I wasn’t something was up when he sent his assistant to another room. He pulled a key out more based on my experience and education. But I needed my job. I provided for my child and simply said, “What can I do? Men will be men.” He left; I cried. I was so young, so naive. I thought they would thank me and fly ever after.
Unfortunate Reality

On her daily walk she was taking in the scenery.
A sudden transformation, a different dimension she was entering.
She was experiencing a shortness of breath;
panic arose when she realized it was a hand on her mouth,
and an arm across her chest.
The tugging of her clothes made her thrash about as if a fish engulfed in air,
feeling powerless in a time of despair.
Getting emotional, feeling less than a woman, a human being, having no self-worth.
The cool breeze through a window and darkness of the bedroom consumed her.
Her body covered in goose bumps and perspiration, only a dream,
yet it felt so real was the rationalization.
A never-ending nightmare that she cannot delete from her mental memory vault.
But fortunate and relieved that she wasn’t the victim of yet another sexual assault.
When will I forget?
Dear Killer,

I’m writing this letter to inform you of all the killings you have committed. When you robbed me of my innocence, you killed my childhood. You killed my self-worth, you killed my ability to trust. You killed the lust I had for love. You killed my belief that life is good. You killed my belief that there is a god who loves me. My life is over, you killed what made me want to live. Now I am only a corpse, a zombie, the walking dead. I’m cold and I have zero emotions. You killed my ability to feel anything except like I’m a piece of trash. You must have killed my mom the same way, but she’s dead to me regardless...because she killed my belief that she would protect me. Anyways I hate you, and I will always hate you.

Sincerely,
Your Daughter
Everyone looks at me without knowing about my pain... Nobody hears my deep cry...

I want to tell the world how I feel... I need someone to understand... I don’t want to be judged...

I felt threatened but nobody believed me... I felt invited and abandoned by my loved ones... Some of them even blamed me...

They’ll feel offended by my confession but I need to break this silence...
Respect Her – Or Else

She’s a woman, a lady, the mother of civilization, please respect her as such.

All life must come through her womb, please don’t touch.

Unless given permission, consensual intent.

Verbally also, yes there’s a difference, from you look nice today, compared to inappropriate, crossing the line.

We all know the difference, METOO movement, respect her decisions.

All that was in the dark came to light, thank god for 2017, 2018 do what’s right!

National Woman’s Day, We Pray.
No Means No

You know a survivor. You are a survivor.
Sexual Violence in Communities of Color

Three Categories of Sexual Violence:

Rape: including completed or attempted penetration when the perpetrator uses physical force or when the victim was drunk, high, drugged, or passed out and unable to consent.

Sexual coercion: including when the perpetrator has sexual contact with the victim by telling lies, threatening to end the relationship or spread rumors, or using their authority or influence over the victim.

Unwanted sexual contact: such as kissing or fondling or noncontact unwanted sexual experience, including being flashed or forced to view sexually explicit media.

EMBRACE YOUR VOICE

Mes de Conciencia sobre la Agresión Sexual

#SAAM
I’m Sorry, I’m Sorry, I’m Sorry

I’m sorry for all the pain I cause you,
I’m sorry for all the hurt I cause you,
    I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m sorry,

    I’m sorry if I made you cry,
    I’m sorry if I took your pride,
    I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m sorry,

    I’m sorry for not holding you,
    I’m sorry for not protecting you,
    I’m sorry for not caring about you,
    I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m sorry,

    I’m sorry that “I’m sorry” is not enough...
Starting Over

LOVE AND MERCY

April 2018

A Self-Made WOMAN

ME TOO
You love me don’t hurt me.

You love me don’t hurt me.

STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN.

Prevenir es posible.

Prevenir es posible.

Hombres y mujeres son víctimas de abuso sexual.

Dí no al abuso sexual.

My voice no means no.

Fear, tension, pain, violence.

Prevenir es posible.
Real Love
Doesn't Hurt Like This
Stop the Violence! It Hurts Everyone.

No Sexual Abuse
Mental Slave

As the past becomes the future, she’s still mentally in chain.
The haunting memories trying to escape her mental maze.
Physically at ease, but morally in pain.
Striving for normalcy, as if legally insane.
Behavior estranged, lashing out in rage.
No matter how she grows she’s constantly reliving those unremovable days.
Her grieving is a haze.
Her tragedy gives her strength; her insecurities and memories; she set ablaze.
A new life, she turns the page.
She’s no longer a mental slave.
She freed herself from her mental chains.
YOU RAPED MY BODY, MY HEART
And My SOUL

You Raped My Body, My Heart
And My Soul

When I said No More
I meant No More!
No More of your lies, the violence, your
manipulative ways
No More of your abuse, the rapes
My mind was washed out in the haze
You once were so charming, so handsome, so debonair.
You now are so deceitful, so evil
You no longer are...
You ripped my heart to pieces
Torn it bit by bit
Stomped on it, crushed it
Hurt it into a bottomless pit
You Raped My Body, My Heart
Spit out my soul
You deserve Satan's kingdom
The Inferno thru the souls
Portals,
I will restore the shattered pieces of my heart, Body
And Soul
And with Faith, Hope
And Trust
My Life again can be whole...
Your voice matters!!

It hurts the most when the person that made you feel so special yesterday, makes you feel so unwanted today...

The sound of violence is silence
The silence of no one caring
The silence of no one calling...
The silence of hiding bruises
The silence of covering scars...
The silence of hate
Need Support?
Ryerson.ca sexual-violence resources

Your voice has power!!
you are not alone!
you are believed
Survivors are BRAVE!!

#STOP violence against women
Delicate Rose

Damaged petals on a delicate flower, Caused by the touch of a familiar breeze,
A breeze strong enough to uproot trees, Destroy dreams and ignore pleas,
Pleas that plead for help, Help please she’s in need of help,
Her needs were deceived and dealt,
To men’s desire’s of greed they feed themselves, Hollow on the inside I’ve seen myself,
Broken wings on birds that still soar, Sexual fulfillment what these men kill for,
The pain our women endure the reason their eyes still pour,
I feel for the abused we must yield for, The misused and violated,
Some try to hate it our fortitude has contemplated,
Mind not sedated we wont stop until the abuse is annihilated,
Love is still here evidence shows,
Admire it’s beauty, but don’t touch the delicate rose.
SHE SAID NO.

WHAT DOES NO MEAN?

Are you kissing?  Yes!

Is your clothing off?  Yes!

Are you turned on?  Yes!

Have you slept together before?  Yes!

IT STILL MEANS NO!

Only act if you get a Yes!!!!

I Trust Myself.

tension  calm  guilt  hurt

violence
Event Planning Committee and Sponsors

- Montgomery County Sexual Assault Response Team (SART)
- Montgomery County Victim Assistance and Sexual Assault Program (VASAP) and Victim Services Board
- Montgomery County Family Justice Center
- Montgomery County Commission for Women
- Montgomery County State’s Attorney’s Office
- Montgomery County Police Department
- Montgomery County Department of Correction and Rehabilitation
- Montgomery County Sheriff’s Office
- Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention (SHARP)
- Universities at Shady Grove
- Montgomery College
- Adventist Health Care/Shady Grove Medical Center

THANK YOU!
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